

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City
September 24, 2019

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, Ambassadors, and world leaders: Seven decades of history have passed through this hall, in all of their richness and drama. Where I stand, the world has heard from Presidents and Premiers at the height of the cold war. We have seen the foundation of nations. We have seen the ringleaders of revolution. We have beheld saints who inspired us with hope, rebels who stirred us with passion, and heroes who emboldened us with courage—all here to share plans, proposals, visions, and ideas on the world's biggest stage.

Like those who met us before, our time is one of great contests, high stakes, and clear choices. The essential divide that runs all around the world and throughout history is once again thrown into stark relief. It is the divide between those whose thirst for control deludes them into thinking they are destined to rule over others and those people and nations who want only to rule themselves.

I have the immense privilege of addressing you today as the elected leader of a nation that prizes liberty, independence, and self-government above all. The United States, after having spent over \$2½ trillion since my election to completely rebuild our great military, is also, by far, the world's most powerful nation. Hopefully, it will never have to use this power.

Americans know that in a world where others seek conquest and domination, our Nation must be strong in wealth, in might, and in spirit. That is why the United States vigorously defends the traditions and customs that have made us who we are.

Like my beloved country, each nation represented in this hall has a cherished history, culture, and heritage that is worth defending and celebrating and which gives us our singular potential and strength. The free world must embrace its national foundations. It must not attempt to erase them or replace them.

Looking around and all over this large, magnificent planet, the truth is plain to see: If you want freedom, take pride in your country. If you want democracy, hold on to your sovereignty. And if you want peace, love your nation. Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first.

The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots. The future belongs to sovereign and independent nations who protect their citizens, respect their neighbors, and honor the differences that make each country special and unique.

It is why we in the United States have embarked on an exciting program of national renewal. In everything we do, we are focused on empowering the dreams and aspirations of our citizens. Thanks to our pro-growth economic policies, our domestic unemployment rate reached its lowest level in over half a century. Fueled by massive tax cuts and regulations cuts, jobs are being produced at a historic rate. Six million Americans have been added to the employment rolls in under 3 years.

Last month, African American, Hispanic American, and Asian American unemployment reached their lowest rates ever recorded. We are marshaling our Nation's vast energy abundance, and the United States is now the number-one producer of oil and natural gas anywhere in the world. Wages are rising, incomes are soaring, and 2.5 million Americans have been lifted out of poverty in less than 3 years.

As we rebuild the unrivaled might of the American military, we are also revitalizing our alliances by making it very clear that all of our partners are expected to pay their fair share of the tremendous defense burden, which the United States has borne in the past.

At the center of our vision for national renewal is an ambitious campaign to reform international trade. For decades, the international trading system has been easily exploited by nations acting in very bad faith. As jobs were outsourced, a small handful grew wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

In America, the result was 4.2 million lost manufacturing jobs and \$15 trillion in trade deficits over the last quarter century. The United States is now taking that decisive action to end this grave economic injustice. Our goal is simple: We want balanced trade that is both fair and reciprocal.

We have worked closely with our partners in Mexico and Canada to replace NAFTA with the brandnew and, hopefully, bipartisan U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Tomorrow I will join Prime Minister Abe of Japan to continue our progress in finalizing a terrific new trade deal. As the United Kingdom makes preparations to exit the European Union, I have made clear that we stand ready to complete an exceptional new trade agreement with the U.K. that will bring tremendous benefits to both of our countries. We are working closely with Prime Minister Boris Johnson on a magnificent new trade deal.

The most important difference in America's new approach on trade concerns our relationship with China. In 2001, China was admitted to the World Trade Organization. Our leaders then argued that this decision would compel China to liberalize its economy and strengthen protections to provide—things that were unacceptable to us and for private property and for the rule of law. Two decades later, this theory has been tested and proven completely wrong.

Not only has China declined to adopt promised reforms, it has embraced an economic model dependent on massive market barriers, heavy state subsidies, currency manipulation, product dumping, forced technology transfers, and the theft of intellectual property and also trade secrets on a grand scale.

As just one example, I recently met the CEO of a terrific American company, Micron Technology, at the White House. Micron produces memory chips used in countless electronics. To advance the Chinese Government's 5-year economic plan, a company owned by the Chinese state allegedly stole Micron's designs, valued at up to \$8.7 billion. Soon, the Chinese company obtains patents for nearly an identical product, and Micron was banned from selling its own goods in China. But we are seeking justice.

The United States lost 60,000 factories after China entered the WTO. This is happening to other countries all over the globe. The World Trade Organization needs drastic change. The second largest economy in the world should not be permitted to declare itself a "developing country" in order to game the system at others' expense. For years, these abuses were tolerated, ignored, or even encouraged. Globalism exerted a religious pull over past leaders, causing them to ignore their own national interests.

But as far as America is concerned, those days are over. To confront these unfair practices, I placed massive tariffs on more than \$500 billion worth of Chinese-made goods. Already, as a result of these tariffs, supply chains are relocating back to America and to other nations, and billions of dollars are being paid to our Treasury.

The American people are absolutely committed to restoring balance to our relationship with China. Hopefully, we can reach an agreement that would be beneficial for both countries. But as I have made very clear, I will not accept a bad deal for the American people.

As we endeavor to stabilize our relationship, we're also carefully monitoring the situation in Hong Kong. The world fully expects that the Chinese Government will honor its binding treaty, made with the British and registered with the United Nations, in which China commits to protect Hong Kong's freedom, legal system, and democratic ways of life. How China chooses to handle the situation will say a great deal about its role in the world in the future. We are all counting on President Xi as a great leader.

The United States does not seek conflict with any other nation. We desire peace, cooperation, and mutual gain with all. But I will never fail to defend America's interests. One of the greatest security threats facing peace-loving nations today is the repressive regime in Iran. The regime's record of death and destruction is well known to us all. Not only is Iran the world's number-one state sponsor of terrorism, but Iran's leaders are fueling the tragic wars in both Syria and Yemen.

At the same time, the regime is squandering the nation's wealth and future in a fanatical quest for nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. We must never allow this to happen. To stop Iran's path to nuclear weapons and missiles, I withdrew the United States from the terrible Iran nuclear deal, which has very little time remaining, did not allow inspection of important sites, and did not cover ballistic missiles.

Following our withdrawal, we have implemented severe economic sanctions on the country. Hoping to free itself from sanctions, the regime has escalated its violent and unprovoked aggression. In response to Iran's recent attack on Saudi Arabian oil facilities, we just imposed the highest level of sanctions on Iran's central bank and sovereign wealth fund.

All nations have a duty to act. No responsible government should subsidize Iran's bloodlust. As long as Iran's menacing behavior continues, sanctions will not be lifted; they will be tightened. Iran's leaders will have turned a proud nation into just another cautionary tale of what happens when a ruling class abandons its people and embarks on a crusade for personal power and riches.

For 40 years, the world has listened to Iran's rulers as they lash out at everyone else for the problems they alone have created. They conduct ritual chants of "Death to America" and traffic in monstrous anti-Semitism. Last year the country's Supreme Leader stated, "Israel is a malignant cancerous tumor . . . that has to be removed and eradicated: it is possible, and it will happen." America will never tolerate such anti-Semitic hate.

Fanatics have long used hatred of Israel to distract from their own failures. Thankfully, there is a growing recognition in the wider Middle East that the countries of the region share common interests in battling extremism and unleashing economic opportunity. That is why it is so important to have full, normalized relations between Israel and its neighbors. Only a relationship built on common interests, mutual respect, and religious tolerance can forge a better future.

Iran's citizens deserve a government that cares about reducing poverty, ending corruption, and increasing jobs, not stealing their money to fund a massacre abroad and at home. After four decades of failure, it is time for Iran's leaders to step forward and to stop threatening other countries, and focus on building up their own country. It is time for Iran's leaders to finally put the Iranian people first.

America is ready to embrace friendship with all who genuinely seek peace and respect. Many of America's closest friends today were once our greatest foes. The United States has never believed in permanent enemies. We want partners, not adversaries. America knows that while anyone can make war, only the most courageous can choose peace.

For this same reason, we have pursued bold diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula. I have told Kim Jong Un what I truly believe: that, like Iran, his country is full of tremendous untapped potential, but that to realize that promise, North Korea must denuclearize.

Around the world, our message is clear: America's goal is lasting, America's goal is harmony, and America's goal is not to go with these endless wars—wars that never end. With that goal in mind, my administration is also pursuing the hope of a brighter future in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the Taliban has chosen to continue their savage attacks. We will continue to work with our coalition of Afghan partners to stamp out terrorism, and we will never stop working to make peace a reality.

Here in the Western Hemisphere, we are joining with our partners to ensure stability and opportunity all across the region. In that mission, one of our most critical challenges is illegal immigration, which undermines prosperity, rips apart societies, and empowers ruthless criminal cartels.

Mass illegal migration is unfair, unsafe, and unsustainable for everyone involved: the sending countries and the depleted countries. And they become depleted very fast, but their youth is not taken care of and human capital goes to waste.

The receiving countries are overburdened with more migrants than they can responsibly accept. And the migrants themselves are exploited, assaulted, and abused by vicious coyotes. Nearly one-third of women who make the journey north to our border are sexually assaulted along the way. Yet, here in the United States and around the world, there is a growing cottage industry of radical activists and nongovernmental organizations that promote human smuggling. These groups encourage illegal migration and demand erasure of national borders.

Today I have a message for those open-border activists who cloak themselves in the rhetoric of social justice: Your policies are not just. Your policies are cruel and evil. You are empowering criminal organizations that prey on innocent men, women, and children. You put your own false sense of virtue before the lives, well-being, and [of]* countless innocent people. When you undermine border security, you are undermining human rights and human dignity.

Many of the countries here today are coping with the challenges of uncontrolled migration. Each of you has the absolute right to protect your borders, and so, of course, does our country. Today we must resolve to work together to end human smuggling, end human trafficking, and put these criminal networks out of business for good.

To our country, I can tell you sincerely: We are working closely with our friends in the region—including Mexico, Canada, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Panama—to uphold the integrity of borders and ensure safety and prosperity for our people. I would like to thank President López Obrador of Mexico for the great cooperation we are receiving and for right now putting 27,000 troops on our southern border. Mexico is showing us great respect, and I respect them in return.

The U.S., we have taken very unprecedented action to stop the flow of illegal immigration. To anyone considering crossings of our border illegally, please hear these words: Do not pay the smugglers. Do not pay the coyotes. Do not put yourself in danger. Do not put your children in danger. Because if you make it here, you will not be allowed in; you will be promptly returned home. You will not be released into our country. As long as I am President of the United States, we will enforce our laws and protect our borders.

* White House correction.

For all of the countries of the Western Hemisphere, our goal is to help people invest in the bright futures of their own nation. Our region is full of such incredible promise: dreams waiting to be built and national destinies for all. And they are waiting also to be pursued.

Throughout the hemisphere, there are millions of hard-working, patriotic young people eager to build, innovate, and achieve. But these nations cannot reach their potential if a generation of youth abandon their homes in search of a life elsewhere. We want every nation in our region to flourish and its people to thrive in freedom and peace.

In that mission, we are also committed to supporting those people in the Western Hemisphere who live under brutal oppression, such as those in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. According to a recent report from the U.N. Human Rights Council, women in Venezuela stand in line for 10 hours a day waiting for food. Over 15,000 people have been detained as political prisoners. Modern-day death squads are carrying out thousands of extrajudicial killings.

The dictator Maduro is a Cuban puppet, protected by Cuban bodyguards, hiding from his own people while Cuba plunders Venezuela's oil wealth to sustain its own corrupt communist rule. Since I last spoke in this hall, the United States and our partners have built a historic coalition of 55 countries that recognize the legitimate Government of Venezuela.

To the Venezuelans trapped in this nightmare: Please know that all of America is united behind you. The United States has vast quantities of humanitarian aid ready and waiting to be delivered. We are watching the Venezuela situation very closely. We await the day when democracy will be restored, when Venezuela will be free, and when liberty will prevail throughout this hemisphere.

One of the most serious challenges our countries face is the specter of socialism. It's the wrecker of nations and destroyer of societies. Events in Venezuela remind us all that socialism and communism are not about justice, they are not about equality, they are not about lifting up the poor, and they are certainly not about the good of the nation. Socialism and communism are about one thing only: power for the ruling class.

Today I repeat a message for the world that I have delivered at home: America will never be a socialist country. In the last century, socialism and communism killed 100 million people. Sadly, as we see in Venezuela, the death toll continues in this country. These totalitarian ideologies, combined with modern technology, have the power to excise [exercise]^{*} new and disturbing forms of suppression and domination. For this reason, the United States is taking steps to better screen foreign technology and investments and to protect our data and our security. We urge every nation present to do the same.

Freedom and democracy must be constantly guarded and protected, both abroad and from within. We must always be skeptical of those who want conformity and control. Even in free nations, we see alarming signs and new challenges to liberty.

A small number of social media platforms are acquiring immense power over what we can see and over what we are allowed to say. A permanent political class is openly disdainful, dismissive, and defiant of the will of the people. A faceless bureaucracy operates in secret and weakens democratic rule. Media and academic institutions push flat-out assaults on our histories, traditions, and values.

In the United States, my administration has made clear to social media companies that we will uphold the right of free speech. A free society cannot allow social media giants to silence the

^{*} White House correction.

voices of the people, and a free people must never, ever be enlisted in the cause of silencing, coercing, canceling, or blacklisting their own neighbors.

As we defend American values, we affirm the right of all people to live in dignity. For this reason, my administration is working with other nations to stop criminalizing of homosexuality, and we stand in solidarity with LGBTQ people who live in countries that punish, jail, or execute individuals based upon sexual orientation.

We are also championing the role of women in our societies. Nations that empower women are much wealthier, safer, and much more politically stable. It is therefore vital not only to a nation's prosperity, but also is vital to its national security, to pursue women's economic development.

Guided by these principles, my administration launched the Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiatives. The W-GDP is the first-ever Governmentwide approach to women's economic empowerment, working to ensure that women all over the planet have the legal right to own and inherit property, work in the same industries as men, travel freely, and access credit and institutions.

Yesterday I was also pleased to host leaders for a discussion about an ironclad American commitment: protecting religious leaders and also protecting religious freedom. This fundamental right is under growing threat around the world. Hard to believe, but 80 percent of the world's population lives in countries where religious liberty is in significant danger or even completely outlawed. Americans will never tire—or tire in our effort to defend and promote freedom of worship and religion. We want and support religious liberty for all.

Americans will also never tire of defending innocent life. We are aware that many United Nations projects have attempted to assert a global right to taxpayer-funded abortion on demand, right up until the moment of delivery. Global bureaucrats have absolutely no business attacking the sovereignty of nations that wish to protect innocent life. Like many nations here today, we in America believe that every child—born and unborn—is a sacred gift from God.

There is no circumstance under which the United States will allow international entities [entities]* to trample on the rights of our citizens, including the right to self-defense. That is why, this year, I announced that we will never ratify the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, which would threaten the liberties of law-abiding American citizens. The United States will always uphold our constitutional right to keep and bear arms. We will always uphold our Second Amendment.

The core rights and values America defends today were inscribed in America's founding documents. Our Nation's Founders understood that there will always be those who believe they are entitled to wield power and control over others. Tyranny advances under many names and many theories, but it always comes down to the desire for domination. It protects not the interests of many, but the privilege of few.

Our Founders gave us a system designed to restrain this dangerous impulse. They chose to entrust American power to those most invested in the fate of our Nation: a proud and fiercely independent people.

The true good of a nation can only be pursued by those who love it: by citizens who are rooted in its history, who are nourished by its culture, committed to its values, attached to its people, and who know that its future is theirs to build or theirs to lose. Patriots see a nation and its destiny in ways no one else can.

* White House correction.

Liberty is only preserved, sovereignty is only secured, democracy is only sustained, greatness is only realized, by the will and devotion of patriots. In their spirit is found the strength to resist oppression, the inspiration to forge legacy, the good will to seek friendship, and the bravery to reach for peace. Love of our nations makes the world better for all nations.

So, to all the leaders here today, join us in the most fulfilling mission a person could have, the most profound contribution anyone can make: Lift up your nations. Cherish your culture. Honor your histories. Treasure your citizens. Make your countries strong and prosperous and righteous. Honor the dignity of your people, and nothing will be outside of your reach.

When our nations are greater, the future will be brighter, our people will be happier, and our partnerships will be stronger. With God's help, together we will cast off the enemies of liberty and overcome the oppressors of dignity. We will set new standards of living and reach new heights of human achievement. We will rediscover old truths, unravel old mysteries, and make thrilling new breakthroughs. And we will find more beautiful friendship and more harmony among nations than ever before.

My fellow leaders, the path to peace and progress and freedom and justice and a better world for all humanity begins at home.

Thank you, God bless you, God bless the nations of the world, and God bless America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to President Tijjani Muhammad-Bande and Secretary-General António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations; Sanjay Mehrotra, president and chief executive officer, Micron Technology; Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamanei of Iran; Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un of North Korea; and former President Nicolás Maduro Moros of Venezuela, whose legitimacy was challenged by the U.S. Government, which recognized National Assembly President Juan Gerardo Guaidó Márquez as Interim President of Venezuela on January 23. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 25.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : U.N. General Assembly in New York City.

Locations: New York City.

Names: Abe, Shinzo; Guterres, António Manuel de Oliveira; Johnson, Boris; Khamanei, Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-; Kim Jong Un; López Obrador, Andrés Manuel; Maduro Moros, Nicolás; Mehrotra, Sanjay; Muhammad-Bande. Tijjani.

Subjects: Afghanistan : Counterterrorism efforts; Afghanistan : Former regime; Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : Funding; Canada : Free trade agreement with U.S.; China : Political demonstrations in Hong Kong; China : Trade with U.S.; Civil rights : Firearm rights; Civil rights : Freedom of religion; Civil rights : Freedom of speech; Civil rights : Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, equality; Civil rights : Women's rights and gender equality; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Commerce, international : Intellectual property law, strengthening efforts; Communications : Social media platforms; Cuba : Venezuela, role; Defense and national security : Border security; Drug abuse and trafficking : Foreign narcotics traffickers; Economy, national : Household income and wages; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Energy : Domestic production, promotion efforts; Foreign policy, U.S. : Diplomatic efforts, expansion; Foreign policy, U.S. : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; Foreign policy, U.S. : Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) initiative; Government organization and employees : Federal regulations, review;

Health and medical care : Abortion; Immigration and naturalization : Deportation rates; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Iran : Nuclear program, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; Iran : Nuclear weapons development; Iran : Regional involvement; Iran : Supreme Leader; Iran : Terrorism, sponsorship; Iran : U.S. sanctions; Japan : Prime Minister; Japan : Trade with U.S.; Law enforcement and crime : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; Mexico : Free trade agreement with U.S.; Mexico : Immigration enforcement, cooperation with U.S.; Mexico : President; Middle East : Arab-Israeli conflict, peace process; Middle East : Counterterrorism efforts; New York : President's visits; North Korea : Chairman, State Affairs Commission; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development; Refugees and global migrants : Humanitarian situation; Saudi Arabia : Drone attacks on Aramco oil processing facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq districts; Syria : Civil war and sectarian conflict; Taxation : Tax relief; United Kingdom : Prime Minister; United Kingdom : Trade with U.S.; United Nations : General Assembly; United Nations : Secretary-General; Venezuela : Political unrest and violence; Venezuela : U.S. assistance; World Trade Organization; Yemen : Civil war and sectarian conflict.

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